



**Mayor**  
**Jerome A. Prince**  
City Of Gary, IN



**May 15, 2020**

**City of Gary COVID-19 Update**

My team and I have spent considerable time planning to reopen the City of Gary government, houses of worship and businesses in a safe, responsible way.

Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb made it very clear, local leaders have the right and authority to be more restrictive with reopening governments, houses of worship and businesses if those leaders feel it is necessary to protect their communities.

Trying to balance the needs of a number of groups, from residents to shop owners to City workers, has been a challenge, but the ultimate guide has been the safety of our families, friends and neighbors.

As we reopen, we will draw visitors from other areas and states that have been more restrictive. This will open Gary residents up to more exposure to COVID-19 virus people from less restricted areas coming here to conduct business.

I will make the decisions to reopen Gary based on data, and our data now tells us Gary continues to see double-digit increases in new COVID-19 cases in many of our daily reports.

We will begin reopening City operations, houses of worship and Gary businesses beginning the weekend of May 22nd, with restrictions.

**General Guidelines (Until further notice)**

Whenever possible, residents should work from home to decrease their exposure.

Residents 65 years old and older should continue to stay home. Our seniors are not contracting COVID-19 disease as much as younger groups, but older residents have much higher percentage of COVID-19 related deaths.

All residents older than 2 should wear masks.

Residents should still avoid any groups of more than 10 people.

Playgrounds, basketball courts, sports venues, fitness centers, gyms, spas must remain closed.

## **City Government**

We will reopen City of Gary facilities to employees only on a limited basis on May 18th. More employees will return over next several weeks. Department Heads and managers will contact employees with detailed instructions on their return and expectations of those employees.

City facilities will remain closed to the public until further notice.

## **Houses of Worship**

We initially planned to open this weekend, however, the rate of new COVID-19 cases remains high. This is the reason I am calling to extend restrictions one more week.

Baptist and Church of God In Christ ministers have already planned to hold off in-person services until June.

I call on our faith leaders to continue to conduct on-line services and drive-in services.

## **Businesses: Until May 23**

**All Gary businesses are expected to comply with restrictions until at least May 23.**

Restrictions on businesses will be driven by data on the rate of new COVID-19 infections.

All businesses with any customer traffic must post the legal capacities of their customer areas on entry doors, registers and points of sale. All businesses with any customer traffic also must post a COVID-19 safety plan directly adjacent to their capacity notices.

Beginning May 24, all restaurants, bars with food service, personal service services (barber shops, salons, nail salons, etc.), may open their sites to 25% capacity.

Restaurants, bars with food service, retail and any other stores with customer dining and/or shopping areas must continue phone and online ordering and provide curbside pickup or delivery until May 24.

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Beginning May 24, restaurants and bars with food service may open their dining areas to 25% capacity.

Retail stores may open to 25% of their site's capacity.

Personal service providers may open to 25% capacity and must operate **by appointment only**.

Bars/taverns/nightclubs/adult entertainment businesses must remain closed.

These restrictions will remain in place until further notice. This information will be available at Gary.gov

## Updates

# of Indiana residents COVID-19 tested:	165,448
# of Indiana residents COVID-19 positive:	26,655
# of Indiana COVID-19 related deaths:	1,550
# of Lake County residents COVID-19 tested:	15,136
# of Lake County residents COVID-19 positive:	2,747
# of Lake county COVID-19 related deaths:	136
# of Porter County residents COVID-19 tested:	2,899
# of Porter County residents COVID-19 positive:	381
# of Porter County COVID-19 related deaths:	10
# of Gary residents COVID-19 positive:	534
# of Gary COVID-19 related deaths:	16

## Closing

Obviously, there is a lot to consider in reopening City facilities, houses of worship and businesses. We're all ready to get to some sense of normalcy, even if it's a new normal.

But, we are using data which tells us COVID-19 remains a very strong threat to public health and safety.

Now, more than ever, we must remember, if we remain calm and patient, we will get through this together.

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